

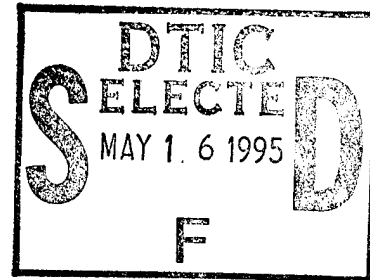
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GROUND TRUTHING TECHNOLOGIES FOR MINING AND NUCLEAR EXPLOSIONS

Brian Stump
Florence Riviere-Barbier
Igor Chernoby
Karl Koch

Southern Methodist University
Dallas, TX 75275

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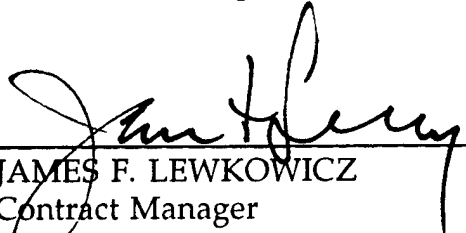
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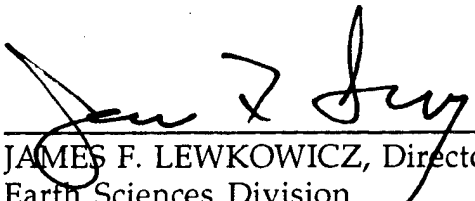
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JAMES F. LEWKOWICZ
Contract Manager
Earth Sciences Division

JAMES F. LEWKOWICZ, Director
Earth Sciences Division

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THE ROLE OF PORTABLE INSTRUMENTATION IN MONITORING A COMPREHENSIVE TEST BAN TREATY

Brian W. Stump*
Department of Geological Sciences
Southern Methodist University
Dallas, Texas 75275-0395

Florence Rivière-Barbier
SAIC/ Center for Seismic Studies
Arlington, Virginia

Igor Chernoby
Experimental Methodological Expedition
Institute of Physics of the Earth
Obninsk, Russia

Karl Koch
Department of Geological Sciences
Southern Methodist University
Dallas, Texas 75275-0395

Seismic monitoring of a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) may require the detection, location and identification of seismic events as small as $m_b = 2.5$ (Wallace *et al.*, 1992) in limited areas of interest. With the emphasis placed on such an agreement by the current Administration, it is important to assess the complexity of the proposed task. The smallest events that must be discriminated from nuclear explosions include those associated with human activities such as construction and mining. These small magnitude events may be recorded by only a few regional stations (OTA Report, 1988). The lowest magnitude level to which monitoring must be accomplished is dependent on the quantification of various evasion scenarios, the most important of which may be decoupling (Murphy *et al.*, 1993; Stevens *et al.*, 1991).

To quantify the size of the monitoring problems, one must first relate the explosive yield of mining explosions to a magnitude measure. Israelson and Carter (1991) compare total explosive weight in ripple-fired explosions to M_L and suggest that in Fennoscandia a 25-50 ton explosion would have a M_L of 2.5 with a coupling scatter as great as a factor of 6-8. The magnitude-yield curves reported by Stevens *et al.* (1991) for unsaturated and saturated geologic materials at NTS predict m_b 's for a contained 25 ton nuclear explosion of 2.04 to 2.64. Reamer and Stump (1991) compared near-source and regional measurements of a series of surface chemical explosions in the Western US. The 150 ton explosion in the series, assigned a M_L of 3.1 in the *Preliminary Determination of Epicenters* by the USGS, is consistent with these other results. These observations and models suggest that a monitoring threshold of 25-50 tons for ripple-fired explosions would be consistent with a

magnitude threshold near 2.5. The number of man made events greater than 50 tons in the US is 10,000 (Richards *et al.*, 1992) with one shot per day over 200 tons.

The discrimination between earthquakes, chemical mining explosions and nuclear explosions using regional seismic waves ($P/S/L_g$ ratios, spectral scalloping, frequency content) has been shown to be strongly region dependent (Patton, 1993; Baumgardt and Der, 1993). The establishment of a physical framework for discriminants is important if successful techniques developed in one region are to be reliably transported and used in another location. Quick acquisition of region specific data, such as information related to crust and upper mantle velocity model, wave propagation characteristics and mining practices of interest, is required for practical implementation of a monitoring system. The utilization of portable instrumentation provides the opportunity to acquire such information in the direct vicinity of the source as well as at regional distances. Digital data acquisition systems developed under the PASSCAL program linked with GPS clocks provide the necessary equipment for integrated near-source and regional studies.

An experiment was executed during the last two weeks of August 1993 to test the applicability of such a seismic monitoring system combining near-source and regional data. It was conducted in and around an ore mine located in Southern Russia at Tyrnyauz in the Caucasus Mountains (Figures 1 and 2). The goals of the deployment were: (1) document blasting practices; (2) quantify the coupling of seismic energy at close-in distances; and (3) resolve regional propagation path effects. The experimental work involved contributions from three institutions in Russia: *Experimental Methodological Expedition (Obninsk)*, *Institute for Dynamics of the Geospheres (Moscow)*, *Institute of Physics of the Earth (Moscow)*; and two institutions in the United States: *Southern Methodist University (Dallas, TX)* and *Center for Seismic Studies (Arlington, VA)*. Multiple types of observations were made of the explosions and included near-source and regional seismic ground motions, high speed film and video, electromagnetic measurements and field documentation. These data provided additional constraints to the seismic source and were used to interpret the adequacy of discriminants often applied only to regional seismograms. The focus of this note will be on the seismic observations, the field documentation and the video records from the explosions.

Validation of mining and blasting practices through direct field observations is identified as 'ground truthing.' These direct observations are compared to official records of blasting practices maintained by the mine. The types of information labeled as blasting practices include the size and types of boreholes, amount and type of explosive, and method and timing of detonation.

TYRNYAUZ MINE AND MINING PRACTICES

The Tyrnyauz mine is located in the Kabardino-Balkaria Republic of Russia close to the Georgian border (Figure 2). This particular mine was chosen for study because of a history of large explosions, two high-quality regional arrays, the occurrence of near-by earthquakes and cooperation with the mine operators. The city of Tyrnyauz has a population of 10,000 with half of these people employed in either the mining or the processing activities. Mineral exploitation began in 1940 in both underground and near-surface (cover photo) mines between 2400 and 3000 m. In the underground operation, over 150 km of 5.5 m diameter tunnels have been excavated. Both tungsten and molybdenum are extracted from the various metamorphic rocks present in this part of the Caucasus. The purpose of the blasting is to fragment the rock to sizes of 900 mm or less. These rock fragments are further reduced in size to 100-350 mm when they are dropped down a 700 m deep well for processing at lower elevations in the mine.

Typically both near-surface and underground production shots are detonated on Sunday mornings. The smaller underground explosions are completed first and consist of one to several charges detonated simultaneously. A near-surface explosion can involve many separate borehole explosions in rows on multiple benches or at different elevations. The individual shots within each row are detonated simultaneously with 20 to 40 ms delays between rows depending on the borehole depths. Boreholes are partially filled with a granular explosive consisting of 71% ANFO covered with an aluminum powder. The detonation is initiated with an electronic blasting machine which in turn ignites detonating cord with a burn rate of 7000 m/s. The purpose of the explosives is to fragment the rock with little or no concern for mass movement. As a result of this philosophy, the blasts tend to bulk the material moving it primarily in the vertical direction. Engineering records at the mine for 11 August 1991 to 28 August 1993 indicate that 6 surface explosions had yields in excess of 50 tons with an average explosion size of 33 tons for this time period. Underground and near-surface explosions were observed on 22 and 29 August 1993. On both days the underground explosions were detonated first with the near-surface following approximately one hour later. The sizes of these explosions were relatively small: 18.9 and 5.8 tons for the underground explosions and 25.3 and 7.3 tons for the surface explosions. The underground explosions consisted of one (29 Aug) and four (22 Aug) individual charges detonated simultaneously.

Official design records for the near-surface blasts were obtained from the mine engineers. Comparison between these records and the actual field deployment of explosives as well as video and photographic documentation of the near-surface explosion revealed wide discrepancies between the documented and actual explosions. Figure 3 compares the planned near-surface blast for 22 August according to official mine records (blue and green symbols) with that detonated as determined by field documentation (blue and white symbols). The total number of boreholes in the actual blast was reduced from that planned as well as the amount of explosive per hole. In addition, thirty bags of explosive (white spheres in Figure 3) were added to the near-surface explosion by draping them across large surface rocks. These bags (42 kg of explosive each) were not placed in boreholes and were intended to fracture large boulders remaining from previous blasts. The time between the rows of boreholes was increased from a planned delay of 25 ms to 40 ms. These changes resulted in a reduction in total explosive charge from 43.3 tons in the official records to an actual yield of 25.3 tons. A significant air blast was introduced from the bags of explosives placed on the boulders and the lack of stemming in each emplacement hole. The discrepancy between official mine records and actual blasting practice illustrates the importance of near-source monitoring of mining practices in order to fully assess source effects on regional seismograms. This 'ground truthing' provides the quantitative information that can be used to separate source and propagation path effects unambiguously at regional distances. Reliance upon official mining records may be misleading if this experience is typical of other mines. The changes that were introduced were brought about by the availability of explosive resources on the day of the shot and the local site geology as interpreted by the blaster. It is not unreasonable to expect similar variations in other mining operations.

Another aspect of the field documentation was the utilization of video and high speed film to determine the timing and regularity of the explosions. Figure 4 displays four video frames (sampled at 16.67 ms/frame) of the near-surface explosion on 22 August. As indicated in Figure 3, this blast occurred on two levels or benches. The first frame illustrates blasts on the first bench. The boreholes are not back-filled to the surface so that explosive by-products can be readily identified in the images. The second frame captures the detonation of bags of explosives on the first bench. These explosions are indicated by the bright orange images. The third frame illustrates the initiation of the first row on the second bench although all the boreholes do not fire simultaneously, probably as a result of

variations in the individual blasting caps in each hole. A number of authors have suggested that regular delay times between individual charges or rows of charges in this case may lead to consistent spectral scalloping in the Fourier spectra of the seismograms (Hedlin, Minster and Orcutt, 1989). These photos indicate that there may be variation between the design and actual shot times thus randomizing the spectral characterization and possibly degrading this discriminant.

SEISMIC INSTRUMENTATION

Near-instantaneous monitoring of man-made seismic sources requires a set of rugged and easily deployed instruments with relatively wide dynamic range. In addition, the data recovered from such a system must be combined in a timely manner with existing permanent regional seismic networks. These experimental goals led to the assembly of a portable instrumentation system for the near-source observations based upon two, six-channel Refraction Technology data acquisition systems (DAS), model 72-06. In order to span the range of ground motions expected in the near-source region, two sets of sensors were deployed with each DAS and included a three-component set of Terra Technology accelerometers and three-component Sprengnether S-6000 2 Hz seismometers. Timing and location information for each instrument was provided by a GPS receiver, making the near-source data available for immediate integration with the regional data. Sixteen-bit data were recovered at 500 samples/s in order to characterize the near-source ground motions. This data provided a wide-band picture of the source that could be compared to the other near-source observations such as the high speed photography.

Regional seismic data were recorded by Experimental Methodological Expedition (EME) operated facilities: two regional telemetry networks (RSS, installed by EME and a Nanometrics telemetry system installed by Lamont); the Kislovodsk micro-array (installed by CSS); and the broadband IRIS/IDA seismic station (installed by UCSD) (Figure 1). The RSS network includes 7 stations equipped with CM3-KB three-component seismometers and a data acquisition and recording system (designed by EME) with a sampling rate of 128 samples/s. The system has flat velocity response between 0.4 and 20 Hz. The Lamont system consists of seismometers collocated with RSS instruments and characterized by a flat velocity response between 0.2 and 24 Hz with a sample rate of 60 samples/s. The Kislovodsk 4-element micro-array with an aperture of 300 m is equipped with Teledyne-Geotech GS-13 seismometers -- three-components at the middle point and vertical only at the periphery. The instrument response is flat in velocity from 0.5 to 10 Hz and the data are sampled at 40 samples/s. The IRIS/IDA seismic station has three-component STS-1 seismometers with a flat velocity response between 0.003 and 5 Hz and is sampled at 20 samples/s.

NEAR-SOURCE DATA

The near-source data provide the opportunity to evaluate time and frequency domain differences between the simultaneous underground explosions and the ripple-fired near-surface explosions. Figure 5 compares the 22 August vertical velocity records from the near-surface and underground explosions at one of the near-source stations (S2). A number of source characteristics are immediately evident. First, the increased low frequency content of the near-surface explosion signal relative to the underground can be observed in both the time and frequency domain. The near-surface explosion spectrum is larger by as much as an order of magnitude in the frequency band of 1 to 5 Hz. The spectra from the two explosions merge at the higher frequencies although there is still considerable variation between the two at a given frequency. The total duration of the surface explosion is close to 200 ms and would predict a spectral hole at 5 Hz from this temporal window and suggests that source duration controls the spectral character in the 1

to 5 Hz band. Spectral interference from the interaction of the waveforms generated by each row is harder to identify in the spectra and may reflect the scatter in the individual detonations as identified in the video records. As noted in the explosion discussion, a significant variation from US blasting practices was the inclusion of free surface explosions in the mining blast and the lack of stemming in the emplacement holes. The high-frequency, late-time arrival on the vertical component of the near-source data is evidence of this air blast. Monitoring of such arrivals may be useful in identifying similar types of blasting practices.

REGIONAL DATA

The regional observations from the same explosions allow one to directly assess the effect of propagation path on the source signatures identified in the near-source data. Comparisons between the underground and near-surface explosions on 22 August are made at the regional stations KNG (28 km), KIV (65 km) and GUM (67 km) in Figure 6. The time series from the surface explosion at each of these regional stations are enriched in low frequency energy relative to the seismograms from the underground explosion. Inspection of the whole record spectra accompanying each waveform illustrates that the surface explosion is again enriched to about 5 Hz where the spectra from the two events merge. This comparison confirms that the increased energy from the near-surface blasts, identified in the near-source observations, is also reflected in the regional waveforms. These data suggest that bandwidth measures of regional signals may be used to separate different types of above and underground explosions. Such a discriminant would rely on relative wide band data, out to 10 Hz or beyond in this example.

The repeatability of the source excitation is important if pattern recognition is to be used to separate source types at regional distances. Comparison of the regional signals at three stations (GUM, KIV, KNG) from the underground explosions on 22 and 29 August (Figure 7) illustrates the strong similarity in bandwidth and arrivals from these two sources. Despite the known yield differences (18.9 and 5.8 tons) these records suggest that pattern recognition procedures as proposed by Rivière-Barbier and Grant (1993) might be successful in identifying events of a similar geometry. The differences identified in the near-surface and underground shot (Figure 5 and 6) argues that subtle changes in source depth and spatial or temporal characterization might also be identified with comparable techniques.

Regional arrival time data were used to locate the two explosions on 22 August in order to investigate location bias introduced by utilization of a regional 1D velocity model. The regional locations of the explosions are within 1 km of those determined by the field investigation (Figure 2). This comparison emphasizes the value of selected near-source observations for regional network calibration.

CONCLUSIONS/IMPLICATIONS

The detection, location and identification of small seismic events will increase in importance if a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty is implemented. This experiment has illustrated the utility of combined near-source and regional observations in studying unusual or unidentified events. Digital data acquisition systems in combination with a GPS provide the means for a rapid deployment of portable instrumentation that can quickly be integrated with an existing permanent array. The availability of Internet services further provides for rapid access to the data following the experiment. Correlation and distribution of both the regional and near-source data were performed from KIV the day of the explosions. Anomalous events identified by regional signals under a CTBT can be investigated with a system such as that deployed at Tyrnauz. The near-source observations in combination

with field documentation will provide additional data for improved event identification as a construction or mining activity. Studies such as this one can be used to identify important physical processes in the source region (total source duration and source depth in this case) that contribute to regional observations. The experiment has also identified significant variations between documented and actual blasting practices and suggests that care should be applied when using formal blasting records from a mining operation in the interpretation of regional seismic records.

* now at Los Alamos National Laboratory
 Geophysics Group, EES-3
 Mail Stop C335
 Los Alamos, nm 87545

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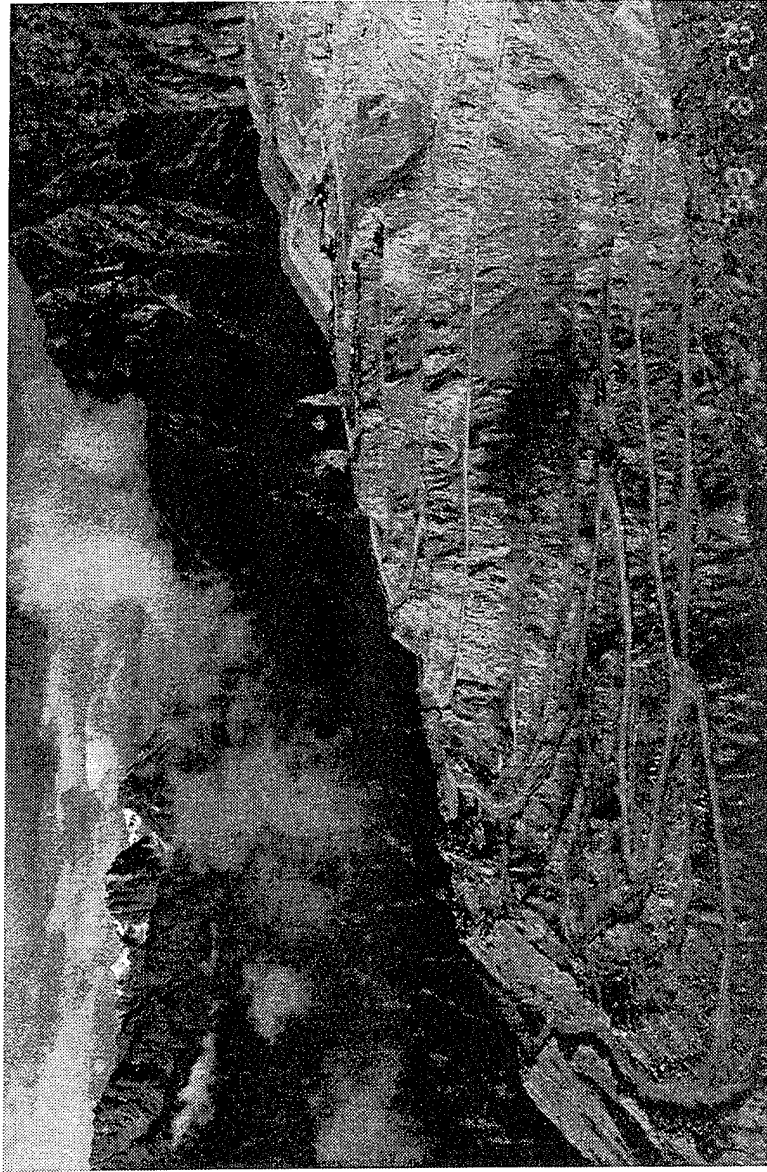


Figure 1

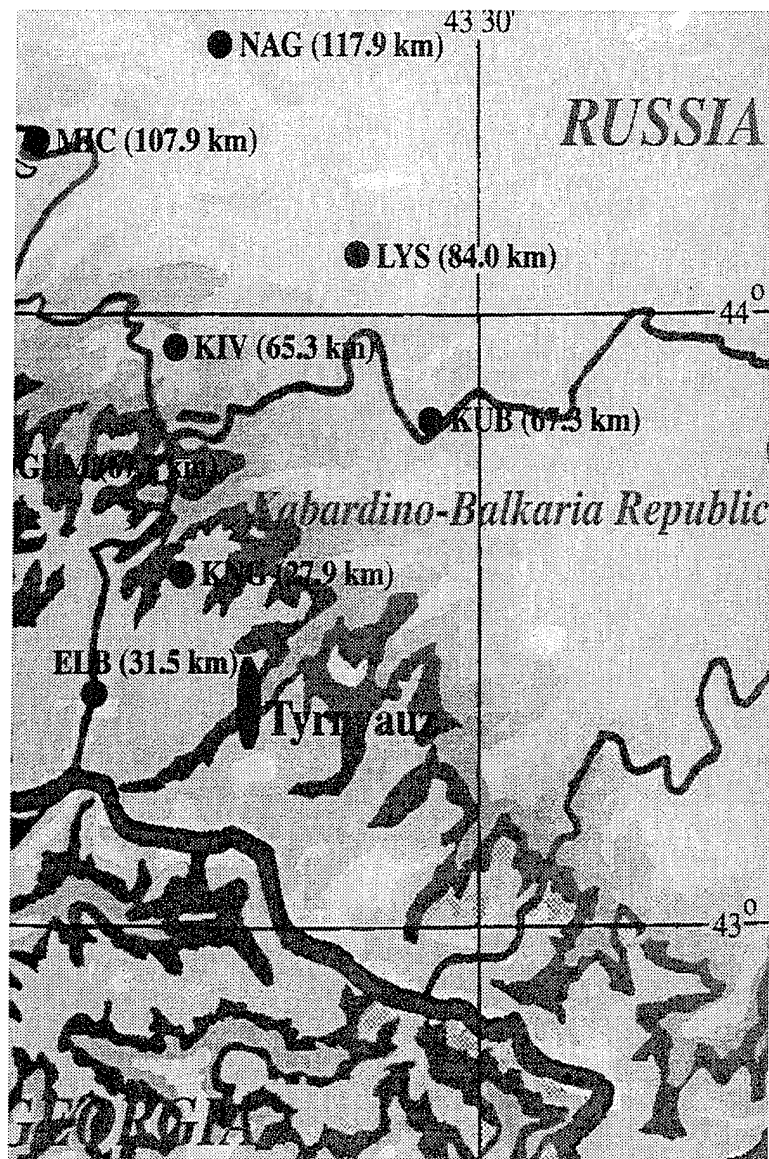


Figure 2

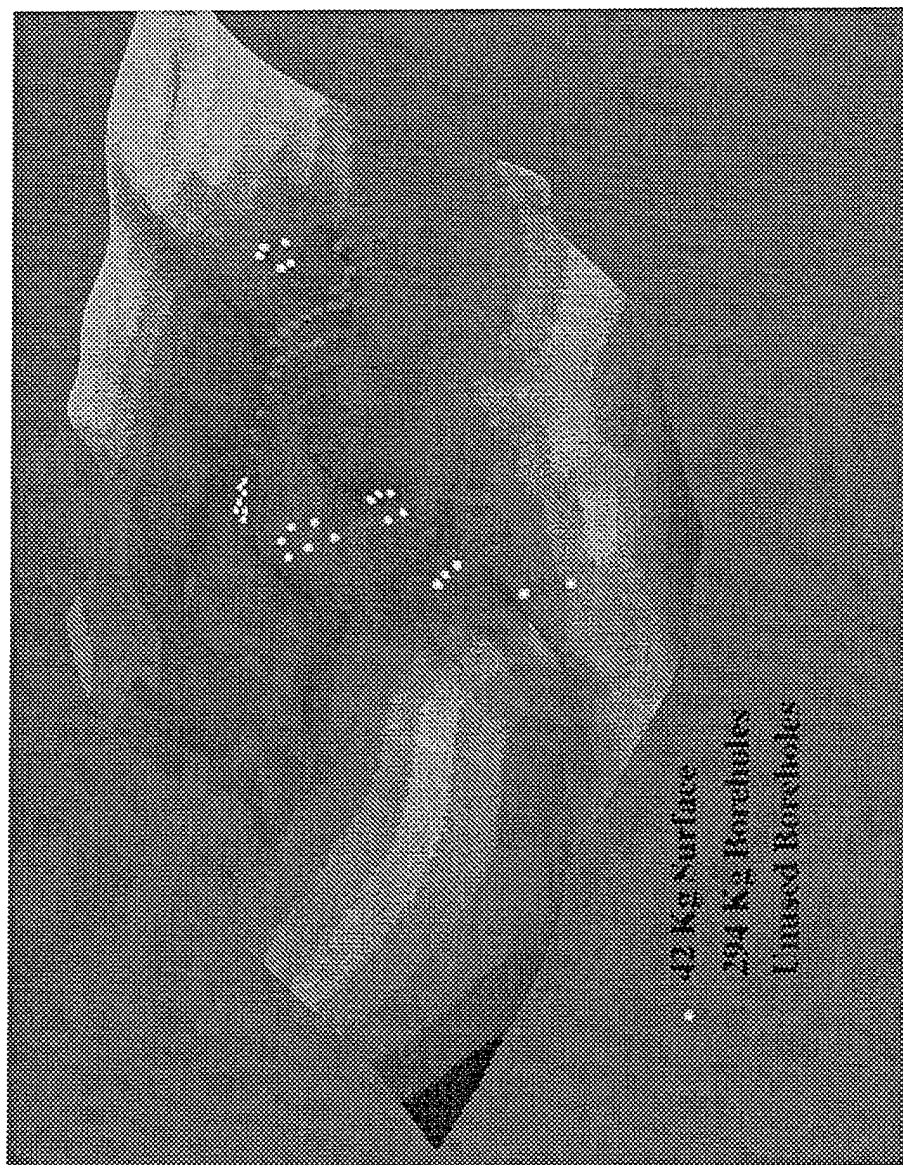


Figure 3

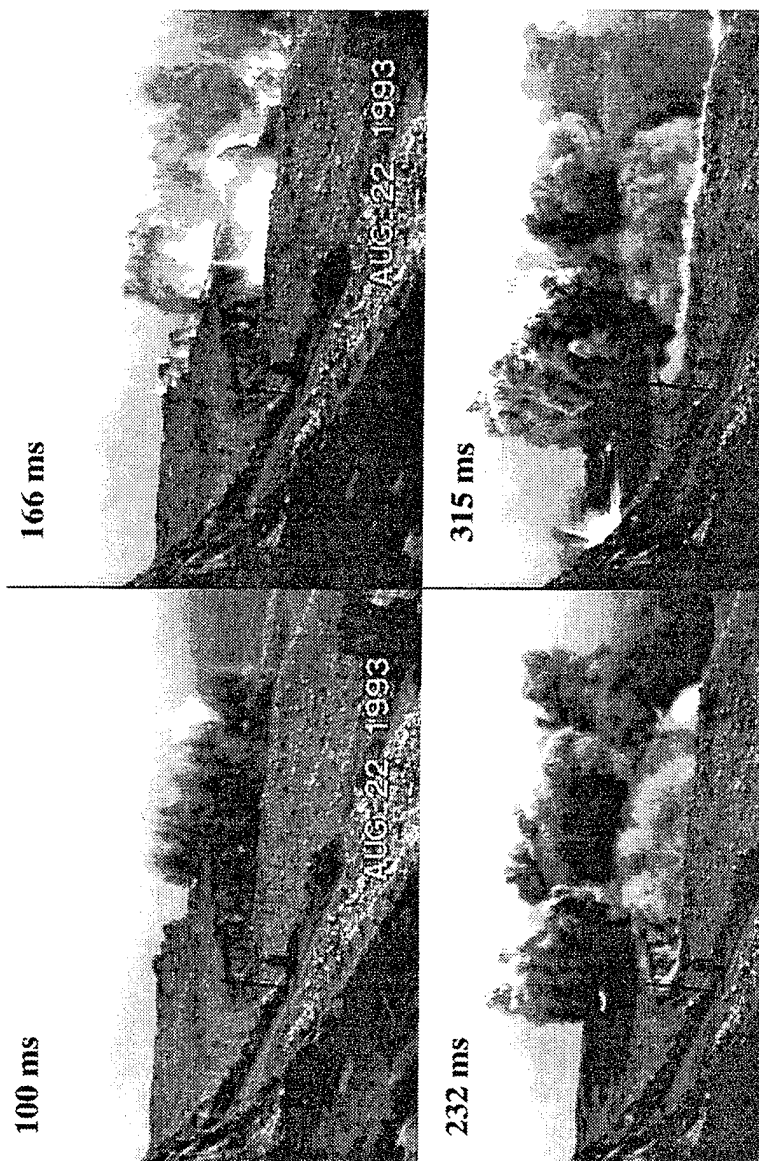


Figure 4

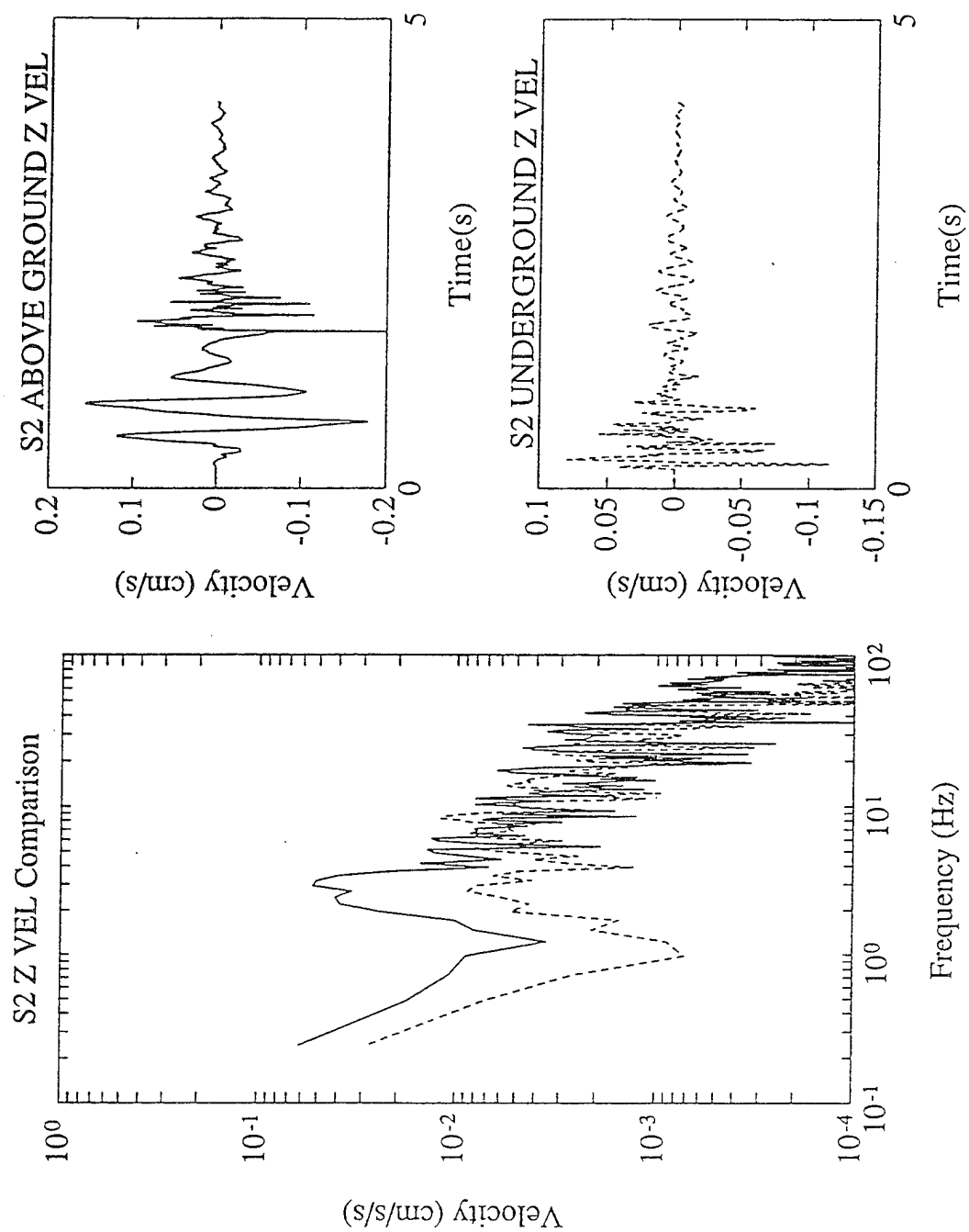


Figure 5

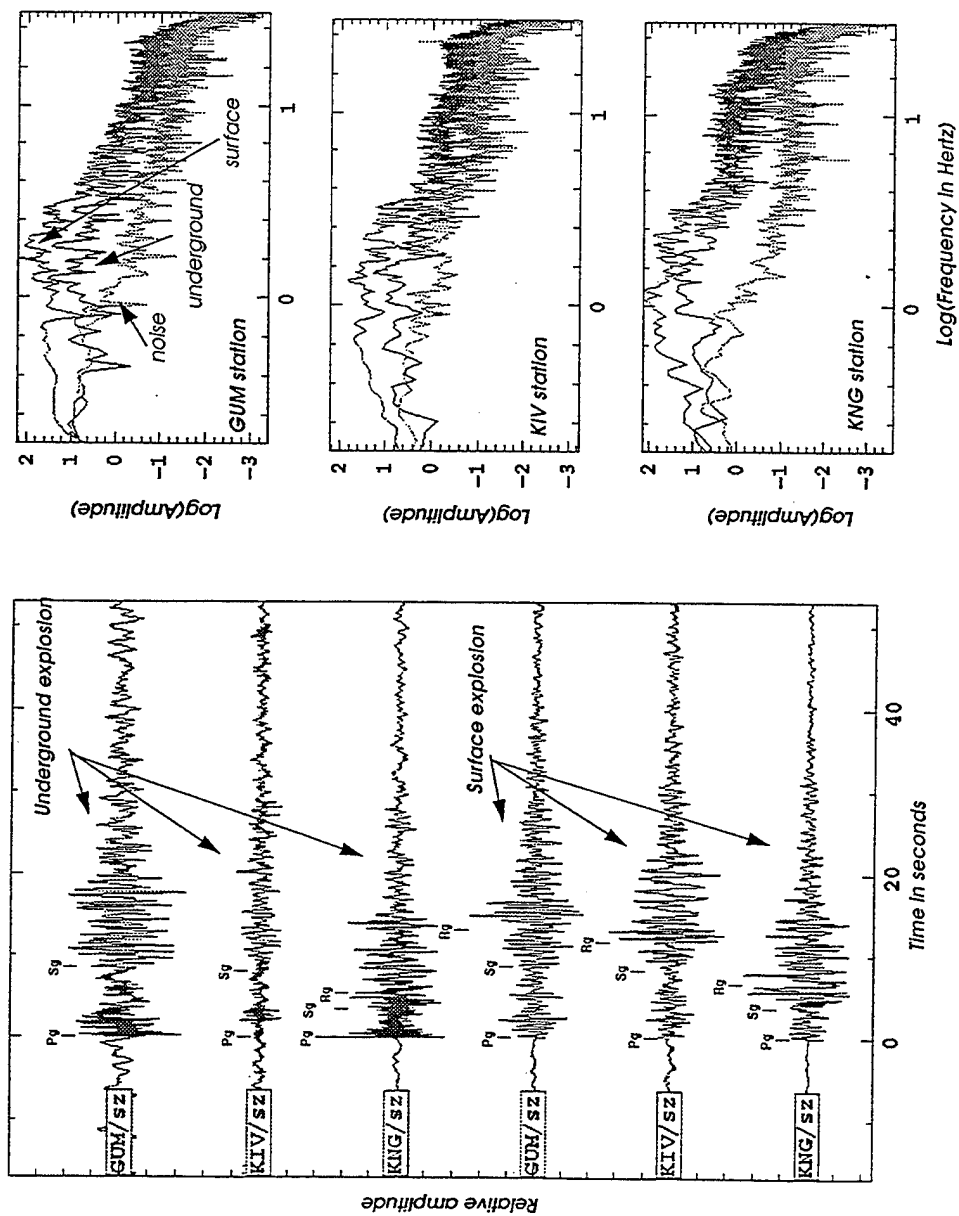


Figure 6

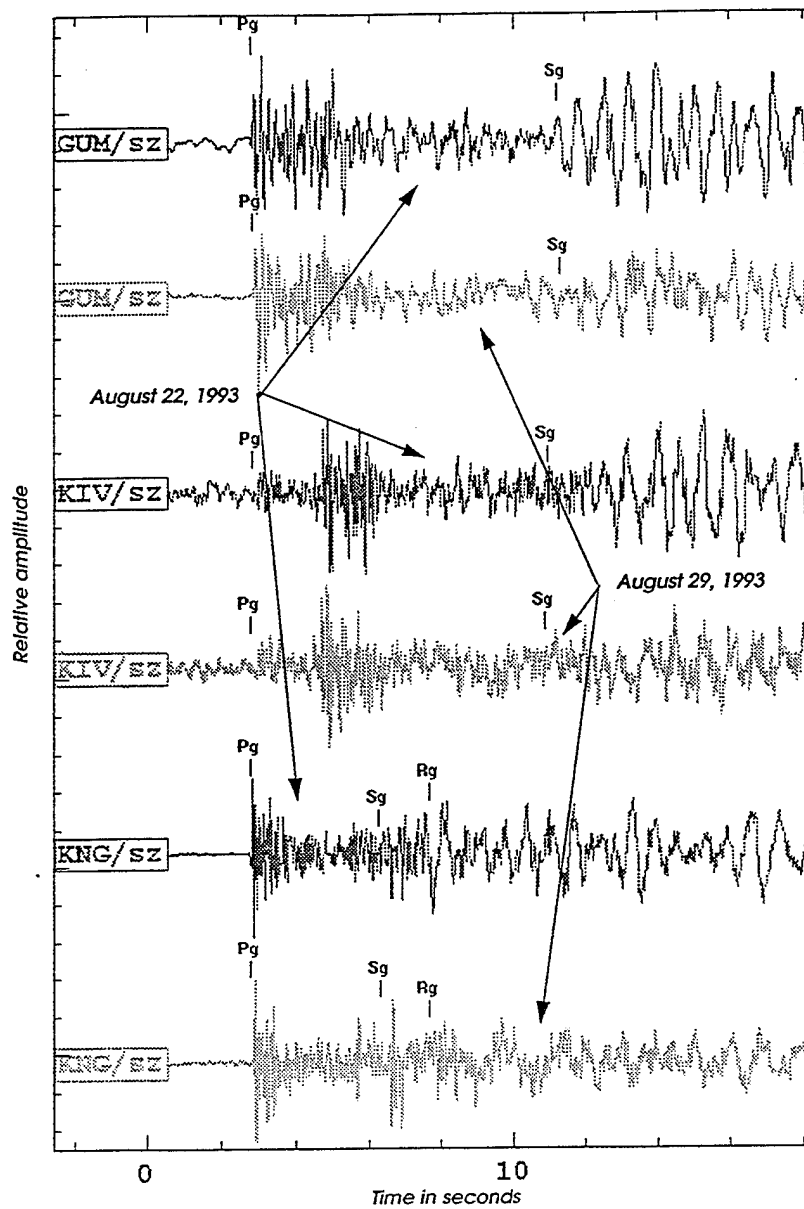


Figure 7

Prof. Thomas Ahrens
Seismological Lab, 252-21
Division of Geological & Planetary Sciences
California Institute of Technology
Pasadena, CA 91125

Prof. Keiiti Aki
Center for Earth Sciences
University of Southern California
University Park
Los Angeles, CA 90089-0741

Prof. Shelton Alexander
Geosciences Department
403 Deike Building
The Pennsylvania State University
University Park, PA 16802

Dr. Thomas C. Bache, Jr.
Science Applications Int'l Corp.
10260 Campus Point Drive
San Diego, CA 92121 (2 copies)

Prof. Muawia Barazangi
Cornell University
Institute for the Study of the Continent
3126 SNEE Hall
Ithaca, NY 14853

Dr. Douglas R. Baumgardt
ENSCO, Inc
5400 Port Royal Road
Springfield, VA 22151-2388

Dr. T.J. Bennett
S-CUBED
A Division of Maxwell Laboratories
11800 Sunrise Valley Drive, Suite 1212
Reston, VA 22091

Dr. Robert Blandford
AFTAC/TT, Center for Seismic Studies
1300 North 17th Street
Suite 1450
Arlington, VA 22209-2308

Dr. Steven Bratt
ARPA/NMRO
3701 North Fairfax Drive
Arlington, VA 22203-1714

Dale Breeding
U.S. Department of Energy
Recipient, IS-20, GA-033
Office of Arms Control
Washington, DC 20585

Dr. Jerry Carter
Center for Seismic Studies
1300 North 17th Street
Suite 1450
Arlington, VA 22209-2308

Mr Robert Cockerham
Arms Control & Disarmament Agency
320 21st Street North West
Room 5741
Washington, DC 20451,

Dr. Zoltan Der
ENSCO, Inc.
5400 Port Royal Road
Springfield, VA 22151-2388

Dr. Stanley K. Dickinson
AFOSR/NM
110 Duncan Avenue
Suite B115
Bolling AFB, DC

Dr Petr Firbas
Institute of Physics of the Earth
Masaryk University Brno
Jecna 29a
612 46 Brno, Czech Republic

Dr. Mark D. Fisk
Mission Research Corporation
735 State Street
P.O. Drawer 719
Santa Barbara, CA 93102

Dr. Cliff Frolich
Institute of Geophysics
8701 North Mopac
Austin, TX 78759

Dr. Holly Given
IGPP, A-025
Scripps Institute of Oceanography
University of California, San Diego
La Jolla, CA 92093

Dr. Jeffrey W. Given
SAIC
10260 Campus Point Drive
San Diego, CA 92121

Dan N. Hagedorn
Pacific Northwest Laboratories
Battelle Boulevard
Richland, WA 99352

Robert C. Kemerait
ENSCO, Inc.
445 Pineda Court
Melbourne, FL 32940

Dr. James Hannon
Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory
P.O. Box 808, L-205
Livermore, CA 94550

U.S. Dept of Energy
Max Koontz, NN-20, GA-033
Office of Research and Develop.
1000 Independence Avenue
Washington, DC 20585

Dr. Roger Hansen
University of Colorado, JSPC
Campus Box 583
Boulder, CO 80309

Dr. Richard LaCoss
MIT Lincoln Laboratory, M-200B
P.O. Box 73
Lexington, MA 02173-0073

Prof. David G. Harkrider
Division of Geological & Planetary Sciences
California Institute of Technology
Pasadena, CA 91125

Prof. Charles A. Langston
Geosciences Department
403 Deike Building
The Pennsylvania State University
University Park, PA 16802

Prof. Danny Harvey
University of Colorado, JSPC
Campus Box 583
Boulder, CO 80309

Jim Lawson, Chief Geophysicist
Oklahoma Geological Survey
Oklahoma Geophysical Observatory
P.O. Box 8
Leonard, OK 74043-0008

Prof. Donald V. Helmberger
Division of Geological & Planetary Sciences
California Institute of Technology
Pasadena, CA 91125

Prof. Thorne Lay
Institute of Tectonics
Earth Science Board
University of California, Santa Cruz
Santa Cruz, CA 95064

Prof. Eugene Herrin
Geophysical Laboratory
Southern Methodist University
Dallas, TX 75275

Dr. William Leith
U.S. Geological Survey
Mail Stop 928
Reston, VA 22092

Prof. Robert B. Herrmann
Department of Earth & Atmospheric Sciences
St. Louis University
St. Louis, MO 63156

Mr. James F. Lewkowicz
Phillips Laboratory/GPE
29 Randolph Road
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Prof. Lane R. Johnson
Seismographic Station
University of California
Berkeley, CA 94720

Dr. Gary McCartor
Department of Physics
Southern Methodist University
Dallas, TX 75275

Prof. Thomas H. Jordan
Department of Earth, Atmospheric &
Planetary Sciences
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Cambridge, MA 02139

Prof. Thomas V. McEvilly
Seismographic Station
University of California
Berkeley, CA 94720

Dr. Keith L. McLaughlin
S-CUBED
A Division of Maxwell Laboratory
P.O. Box 1620
La Jolla, CA 92038-1620

Prof. Bernard Minster
IGPP, A-025
Scripps Institute of Oceanography
University of California, San Diego
La Jolla, CA 92093

Prof. Brian J. Mitchell
Department of Earth & Atmospheric Sciences
St. Louis University
St. Louis, MO 63156

Mr. Jack Murphy
S-CUBED
A Division of Maxwell Laboratory
11800 Sunrise Valley Drive, Suite 1212
Reston, VA 22091 (2 Copies)

Dr. Keith K. Nakanishi
Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory
L-025
P.O. Box 808
Livermore, CA 94550

Prof. John A. Orcutt
IGPP, A-025
Scripps Institute of Oceanography
University of California, San Diego
La Jolla, CA 92093

Dr. Howard Patton
Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory
L-025
P.O. Box 808
Livermore, CA 94550

Dr. Frank Pilotte
HQ AFTAC/TT
1030 South Highway A1A
Patrick AFB, FL 32925-3002

Dr. Jay J. Pulli
Radix Systems, Inc.
201 Perry Parkway
Gaithersburg, MD 20877

Prof. Paul G. Richards
Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory
of Columbia University
Palisades, NY 10964

Mr. Wilmer Rivers
Multimax Inc.
1441 McCormick Drive
Landover, MD 20785

Dr. Alan S. Ryall, Jr.
Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory
L-025
P.O. Box 808
Livermore, CA 94550

Dr. Chandan K. Saikia
Woodward Clyde- Consultants
566 El Dorado Street
Pasadena, CA 91101

Mr. Dogan Seber
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Thomas J. Sereno, Jr.
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Dr. Michael Shore
Defense Nuclear Agency/SPSS
6801 Telegraph Road
Alexandria, VA 22310

Prof. David G. Simpson
IRIS, Inc.
1616 North Fort Myer Drive
Suite 1050
Arlington, VA 22209

Dr. Jeffrey Stevens
S-CUBED
A Division of Maxwell Laboratory
P.O. Box 1620
La Jolla, CA 92038-1620

Prof. Brian Stump
Los Alamos National Laboratory
EES-3
Mail Stop C-335
Los Alamos, NM 87545

Prof. Tuncay Taymaz
Istanbul Technical University
Dept. of Geophysical Engineering
Mining Faculty
Maslak-80626, Istanbul Turkey

Prof. M. Nafi Toksoz
Earth Resources Lab
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
42 Carleton Street
Cambridge, MA 02142

Dr. Larry Turnbull
CIA-OSWR/NED
Washington, DC 20505

Dr. Karl Veith
EG&G
5211 Auth Road
Suite 240
Suitland, MD 20746

Prof. Terry C. Wallace
Department of Geosciences
Building #77
University of Arizona
Tucson, AZ 85721

Dr. William Wortman
Mission Research Corporation
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Dr. Michel Campillo
Observatoire de Grenoble
I.R.I.G.M.-B.P. 53
38041 Grenoble, FRANCE

Dr. Kin Yip Chun
Geophysics Division
Physics Department
University of Toronto
Ontario, CANADA

Prof. Hans-Peter Harjes
Institute for Geophysics
Ruhr University/Bochum
P.O. Box 102148
4630 Bochum 1, GERMANY

Prof. Eystein Husebye
IFJF
Jordskjelvstasjonen
Allegaten 41, 5007 BERGEN

David Jepsen
Acting Head, Nuclear Monitoring Section
Bureau of Mineral Resources
Geology and Geophysics
G.P.O. Box 378, Canberra, AUSTRALIA

Ms. Eva Johannisson
Senior Research Officer
FOA
S-172 90 Sundbyberg, SWEDEN

Dr. Peter Marshall
Procurement Executive
Ministry of Defense
Blacknest, Brimpton
Reading FG7-FRS, UNITED KINGDOM

Dr. Bernard Massinon, Dr. Pierre Mechler
Societe Radiomana
27 rue Claude Bernard
75005 Paris, FRANCE (2 Copies)

Dr. Svein Mykkeltveit
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N-2007 Kjeller, NORWAY (3 Copies)

Dr. Jorg Schlittenhardt
Federal Institute for Geosciences & Nat'l Res.
Postfach 510153
D-30631 Hannover, GERMANY

Dr. Johannes Schweitzer
Institute of Geophysics
Ruhr University/Bochum
P.O. Box 1102148
4360 Bochum 1, GERMANY

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